

Little Bridge Canyon

Death Valley National Park
California / Nevada



Length: 6 – 7 miles (9.6 – 11.2km) round trip round trip depending on route.

Difficulty: Advanced. There is no trail and there are no signs. Multiple canyon entrances on the horizon make navigation tricky. Over 1,900ft (590m) gain in elevation.

Location: Park safely along the roadway 3.1 miles (5km) east of Stovepipe Wells at mile 89 on CA Highway 190. There is no official parking lot.

Highlights: This challenging hike rewards hikers with solitude and great views before entering a remote desert canyon known for its uniquely carved geological formations full of vibrant colors and possible ancient marine fossils. **No collecting!**

Before You Go: There is no cellular coverage in the area. Check the weather and road conditions prior to your trip. Carry water at all times. Bring a map, compass, and GPS device to assist with navigation. Download free GPX files for your GPS or smart devices from:

nps.gov/deva/planyourvisit/hiking.htm

Which Canyon? Many canyons drain Tucki Mountain, the high broad ridgeline sloping east. Scanning east toward the 10 o'clock position, behind and to the left of the primary ridgeline is a slightly obscured smaller ridgeline in the distance. Hidden within the large gap between the two ridgelines is the entrance to Little Bridge Canyon. Now that you've identified your destination, it's time to choose a route.

Easy to Navigate Route: Tracing the drainage from the canyon entrance in the large gap back down toward the road, look for a small hill in the foreground which contains utility equipment on its southern slope. Head east toward the hill and then turn south up the wash where you follow the flow of past flash floods to the reddish mouth of Little Bridge Canyon, 2.5mi (4km) one way.

This route is easy to navigate, but walking through the loose gravel up the steep slope is strenuous. The bridge formation is an additional mile (1.6km) into the canyon; 3.5mi (5.6km) each way.

Shorter Route: The 3mi (4.8km) one way route over the hard packed hilly surface is more direct and less strenuous, but by cutting across the many canyon drainages, navigation is much more difficult.

From the parking area start heading in the 10 o'clock direction; bearing 137°TN (true north)/124°MN (magnetic north) following a shallow wash which parallels the base of the mountains toward the utility poles 0.5mi (0.82km) away. You reach the first utility pole approximately 150ft (46m) east of the wash up on the embankment.

Beyond the utility pole, follow a southeast bearing of 163°TN /154°MN for 0.5mi (0.8km) before dropping into a much larger and deeper wash. The high walls make it tempting to explore, but instead cross the drainage and climb the gentle but rocky gully up its east side.

Over the course of the next mile (1.6km) keep to higher ground and cross numerous minor washes along the way to the reddish mouth of Little Bridge Canyon where it's one more mile (1.6km) to the bridge formation. Return via same route.